

30. A NOTE ON THE INDIAN SPECIES OF THE GENUS  
*LYCAENOPSIS* FELDER (LEPIDOPTERA—LYCAENIDAE)

A short time ago Sir Keith Cantlie told me that the key on page 225 of 'Identification of Indian Butterflies' for separating *Lycaenopsis argiolus sikkima* from *jynteana* by the number of ribs on the androconia had been found by Mr. D. F. Sanders to be unreliable. So I looked into the matter.

In the first edition (1927) of the 'Identification' I had treated *sikkima* as a synonym of *argiolus jynteana*. Shortly after the publication, I had been in correspondence with the late L. J. Toxopeus, who published several papers on the genus, and the changes made by him may be summarised thus:—

(1) 1926 *Treubia* VIII: 365. *Lycaenopsis moorei* nov. for the ♀ type of *lavendularis* Moore, found to be a ♂.

(2) 1927. *Tijd. voor Ent.* LXX: 294. *Actyolepis puspa felderi* for the second *puspa* form in Ceylon. He considered that *lilacea* Hampson (= *crissa* DeNicéville) was the *puspa* form from S. India.

(3) Id. p. 120. Regarded *Celastrina jynteana* and *sikkima* as species, the first with 14 to 15 ribs on the androconia and the second with 11 or 12.

(4) 1928. *Tijd. voor Ent.* LXXI: 224. Introduced *lavendularis* as the name for the *limbata* form from Ceylon.

Except for *lilacea* I accept the changes made by Toxopeus as I was unable to check them in India.

Now I have examined the material in the British Museum (Natural History) and, after studying the published literature and dissecting several specimens, I have come to the following conclusions:—

(a) *lavendularis* Moore (= *moorei* and *felderi* Toxopeus) is the correct name for the *puspa* sub-species from Ceylon.

(b) *lilacea* Hampson (= *crissa* DeNicéville) is the name for the *puspa* form from S. India. Both have strongly marked seasonal forms.

(c) *limbata* is a species with sub-species *amitra* Fruh. from Ceylon: sub-species *limbata* Moore from S. India to Bengal: sub-species *placida* DeNicéville from Sikkim to Burma.

(d) *sikkima* Moore is a synonym of *argiolus jynteana*, a protean sub-species of the wide-spread *argiolus*, one of whose forms *bothrinoides* was mis-spelt *bothrioides* in the 'Identification'. Dry season forms of *placida*, with reduced markings, are not always easy to separate from *jynteana*.

(e) I prefer to retain the generic name *Lycaenopsis* as used in the 'Identification' and deprecate the tendency to split up easily recognised natural groups into a number of genera. For instance the well-known genus *Argymnis* is now left with a single species!

BRITISH MUSEUM (NATURAL HISTORY),

LONDON,

W. H. EVANS

May 18, 1953.